

Holy Name Cathedral
Advent Reflection



Day #4
Wednesday, December 2

The year 2020 has been full of uncertainty, challenges and surprises. This Advent season is like the first Christmas, with elements of uncertainty in Bethlehem and the glorious Birth of the Son of God in a manger. Jesus came to heal our souls, live among us and live within us. His presence in our daily life provides us with the spiritual sustenance and courage in navigating the risks and severity of COVID-19. He inspires us to create innovative playbook for living through the pandemic.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus reveals his profound concern for the crowds of people, who are tired and hungry. The crowds have been following Him for days. Jesus said, "My heart is moved with pity for they have nothing to eat... I do not want to send them away hungry." With seven loaves of bread and a few fish, He gave thanks, broke and multiplied the loaves and fed the crowds. This personal benevolence manifest Jesus' all-consuming care for our physical needs as much as for the nourishment of our souls for eternal life. We surrender our trust in Him and know that He is there to reach out for our daily needs.

Advent is about waiting in the dark until the Light of God springs forth. During Christmas, Filipino homes hang colorful lanterns called "*Parol*" providing streetlight for churchgoers attending "*Simbang Gabi*." "*Simbang Gabi*" is a Filipino Christmas tradition of consecutive nine dawn masses on the days leading up to Christmas. "*Parol*" is the iconic Christmas symbol of the Star of Bethlehem at the time of the Birth of Jesus.

Reflection written by Cathedral Parishioner Grace Villamora